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KEBLE'S EVENING HYMN

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Evening

EVENING

BY THE

REV. JOHN KEBLE

ILLUSTRATED

Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.

ST. LUKE xxiv. 29

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E. P. DUTTON AND COMPANY

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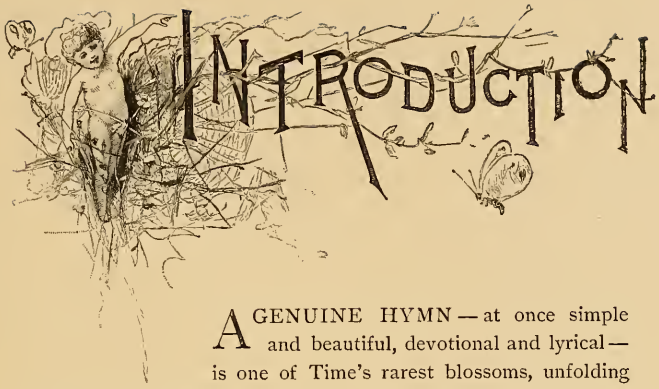

A GENUINE HYMN — at once simple and beautiful, devotional and lyrical — is one of Time's rarest blossoms, unfolding only at long intervals. By way of compensation, it is well nigh immortal; it is handed down from generation to generation, from language to language; "age does not wither, nor custom stale," its sweetness. Its perfume of praise continually rises from fresh altars, long after the heart whence it sprang is turned to dust.

Such a hymn is Keble's "Evening," and it is worthily selected for illustration. Those to whom it is already familiar will be glad to see it in so fair and fitting a dress; those who know it only in hymnals will like to see it as a whole, for the same spirit of melody and devotion breathes throughout.

The Rev. JOHN KEBLE was a native of Fairford, Gloucestershire, England: born in 1792, died in 1866. As Vicar of Hursley, he did excellent and lasting parish work; as author, he is best known by "The Christian Year," from which the "Evening" is taken.

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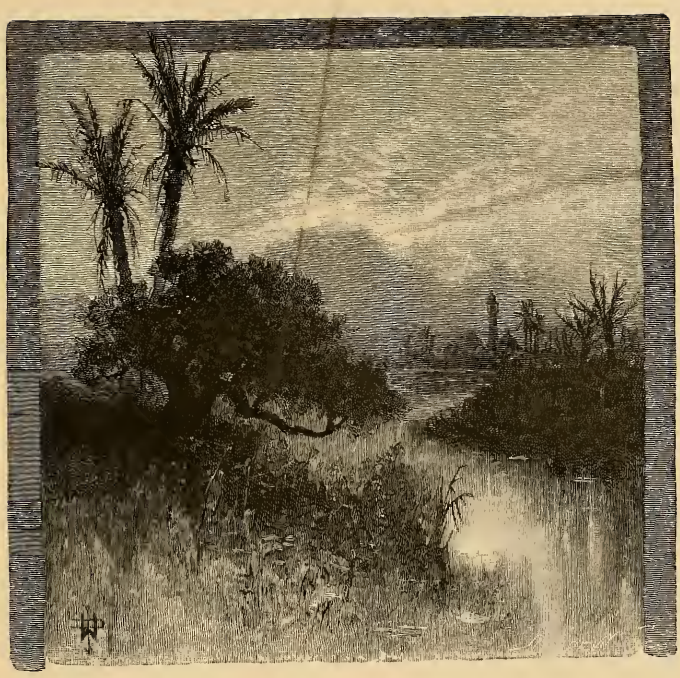


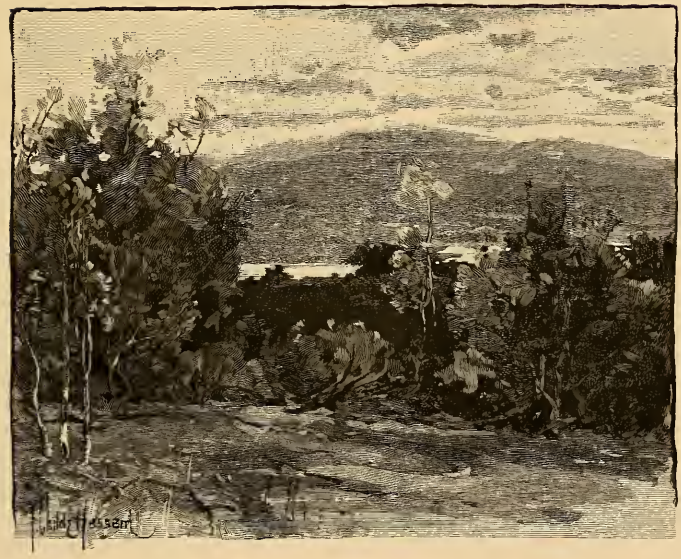
EVENING.

'TIS gone, that bright and orbèd blaze,
Fast fading from our wistful gaze;
Yon mantling cloud has hid from sight
The last faint pulse of quivering light.

In darkness and in weariness
The traveller on his way must press,
No gleam to watch on tree or tower,
Whiling away the lonesome hour.

Sun of my soul! Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near:
Oh, may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes!

When round Thy wondrous works below
My searching rapturous glance I throw,
Tracing out Wisdom, Power, and Love,
In earth or sky, in stream or grove; —



Or by the light Thy words disclose
Watch Time's full river as it flows,
Scanning Thy gracious Providence,
Where not too deep for mortal sense: —

When with dear friends sweet talk I hold,
And all the flowers of life unfold; —
Let not my heart within me burn,
Except in all I Thee discern.

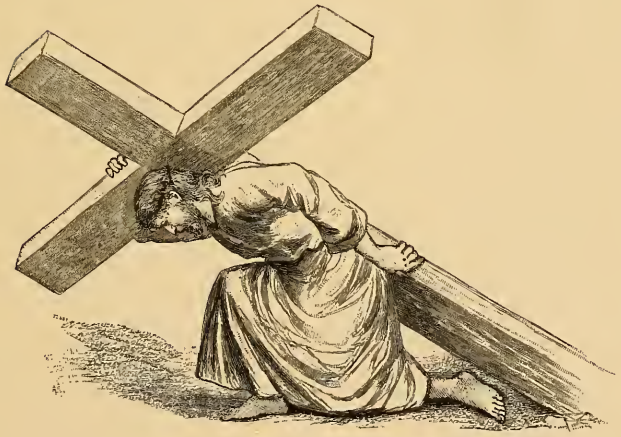
When the soft dews of kindly sleep
My wearied eyelids gently steep,
Be my last thought, how sweet to rest
For ever on my Saviour's Breast.

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee I cannot live:
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without Thee I dare not die.

Thou Framer of the light and dark,
Steer through the tempest Thine own ark:
Amid the howling wintry sea
We are in port if we have Thee.

The Rulers of this Christian land,
'Twixt Thee and us ordained to stand, —
Guide Thou their course, O Lord, aright,
Let all do all as in Thy sight.

Oh, by Thine own sad burthen, borne
So meekly up the hill of scorn,
Teach Thou Thy Priests their daily cross
To bear as Thine, nor count it loss!



If some poor wandering child of Thine
Have spurned, to-day, the voice divine,
Now, Lord, the gracious work begin;
Let him no more lie down in sin.

Watch by the sick: enrich the poor
With blessings from Thy boundless store:

Be every mourner's sleep to-night
Like infants' slumbers, pure and light.

Come near and bless us when we wake,
Ere through the world our way we take;
Till in the ocean of Thy love
We lose ourselves in Heaven above.

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